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## ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Founded by JOSEPH PULITZER

December 11, 1963

Published by  
The Pulitzer Publishing Co.

111 Franklin Ave. (1)

St. Louis, Mo. 63101

Advertiser Service—MAin 1-6666

## THE POST-DISPATCH PLATFORM

I KNOW THAT MY RETIREMENT WILL MAKE NO DIFFERENCE IN ITS CARDINAL PRINCIPLES. THAT IT WILL ALWAYS FIGHT FOR PROGRESS AND REFORM, NEVER TOLERATE INJUSTICE OR CORRUPTION, ALWAYS FIGHT DEMAGOGUES OF ALL PARTIES, NEVER BELONG TO ANY PARTY, ALWAYS OPPOSE PRIVILEGED CLASSES AND PUBLIC PLUNDERERS, NEVER LACK SYMPATHY WITH THE POOR, ALWAYS REMAIN DEVOTED TO THE PUBLIC WELFARE, NEVER BE SATISFIED WITH MERELY PRINTING NEWS, ALWAYS BE IRREVERSIBLY INDEPENDENT, NEVER BE AFRAID TO ATTACK WRONG, WHETHER BY PREDATORY PLUTOCRACY OR PREDATORY POVERTY.

\* JOSEPH PULITZER

April 10, 1907

Sunday, September 29, 1963

## Letters from the People

## Cut Off the Money

The time has come to end the incredible Middle of United States policy in Viet Nam.

The United States supports the Ngo family, the more convinced the Viet Nameese people become that both the Americans and the Family go, and that the Communists are the lesser evil.

There is very little time left in which the situation might be retrieved. The only hope now on the horizon is a resolution to cut off aid to Viet Nam introduced in the Senate by Frank Church of Idaho. It is a cry that "there is no alternative to Diem," now again heard in the State Department. Just, Diem is no alternative. Support him is to guarantee disaster. The support of the situation is preferable.

Despair over the failure of the army to rise against President Diem and his brothers does not recognize the reality of CIA planning for the very special troops who are deployed to prevent a coup attempt. Is it any wonder that verbal encouragement to a revolt sounds unconvincing?

Reports from inside Viet Nam now indicate that if American aid were cut off within a few weeks a successful coup would produce a new regime ready both to co-operate with the United States and to put up a vigorous fight against the Communists. Disappearance of the present government's major financial resource cannot insure such a happy outcome, but the chances are good enough to justify the risk.

A Senate move to cut off American aid to Holland—which had been shooting down Indonesians and violating UN resolutions—brought a vacillating State Department to its senses in 1949. Forthright Senate action can yet retrieve the United States from a debacle in South Viet Nam. If the Church resolution is to be implemented, however, it would be essential to change the leadership of both United States military and CIA missions in Saigon.

The crisis in Viet Nam is political. For American policy-makers to focus narrowly on the ups and downs of the military campaign would blind them to the basic realities. It is well for Mr. McNamara and Gen. Taylor to survey the Viet Nameese scene at first hand. But if their mission, composed almost exclusively of Pentagon officials, signifies a prior decision to ignore or give a low priority to the suffering of the Viet Nameese people and their bitter hatred for the Ngo family regime, then John F. Kennedy will have betrayed those millions in America and Asia who once looked to him for creative leadership.

David Wurfel

Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.

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